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The William Henry Riggs Donation includes the entire collection of this well-known amateur, not only arms, but contemporary portraits of armored knights, a library upon armor, numerous pieces of Renaissance furniture, and panels of stained glass—a benefaction to the Museum which up to that time was second only in importance to the Rogers Bequest.

“Mr. Riggs was born in New York, but from the early fifties had made his home in Paris, where, in the greatest art market in the world, he was in constant touch with collectors and antiquity merchants. For over sixty years he devoted his time and fortune to his life-work. This he maintained was to bring together ‘for the benefit of the art-loving people of his country’ a collection of arms and armor which in its scope and quality would rank with European national collections. To this end he labored zealously. He traveled extensively in Germany, Italy, France, and Spain, and made remarkable ‘finds.’ He knew what had been secured by the early collectors, and, awaiting his opportunity, he gathered from them sooner or later, the pieces he coveted. In fact, the history of his objects is the

history of the great collectors, such as Uboldo, Meyrick, Fontaine, Carrand père, Spitzer, Pourtalès, von Leyden, Magniac, de Cosson, Belleval. Not infrequently his treasures could be traced to national collections. Mr. Riggs’s patient watchfulness brought him many historical pieces, and he did not allow them to slip through his fingers when once captured. His work went on so quietly that few, even amateurs, realized the value of the collection which he was bringing together. For one thing, he permitted very few people to see it; and in later years, when accessions were made they were apt merely to be stored away in his home in Paris, which came finally to be so filled with packing cases that the owner himself could hardly find access to his purchases.”

It was through the influence of the late J. P. Morgan that Mr. Riggs was persuaded to place his collection in the custody of the Metropolitan Museum. It should, however, be considered not merely as a gift to this Museum or the city wherein it stands, but rather to the American people and the American nation to whom it will always now be open and to which it may always be reckoned as a valuable asset.

## PERSIAN, ARABIC AND INDIAN MINIATURES

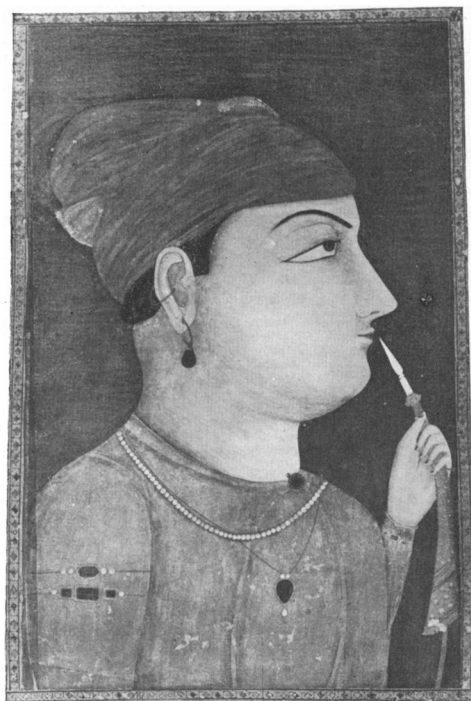
### IN THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

**A** YEAR ago there was exhibited in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts a collection of Persian, Arabic, and Indian paintings, book-bindings, and illuminated manuscripts. These specimens were lent by Dr. Denman W. Ross, having been acquired by him during a recent trip around the world. In January of the present year Dr. Ross gave this collection to the Museum, and it may now be seen in the Nearer Orient room, where it is being displayed with ceramics, textiles and metal-work from Egypt, Arabia, Turkey, Persia and India.

During the past summer the Museum purchased from M. Victor Goloubew his famous collection of Persian and Indian paintings, which for several years has been

exhibited in the Musée des Arts Decoratifs in the Louvre. This collection is now being shown in the Forecourt Room in the Museum.

The importance of these two exhibitions cannot be overestimated. They contain examples from all the schools of painting and calligraphy in the Nearer East, dating from the tenth to the nineteenth century. The earliest paintings show Byzantine influence. In those of the fifteenth century, Chinese characteristics are evident because of the contact between China and Persia during the reign of Timur (Tamerlane). A large group dating from the sixteenth century, is purely Persian in drawing and color. These paintings have great charm in the varied combinations

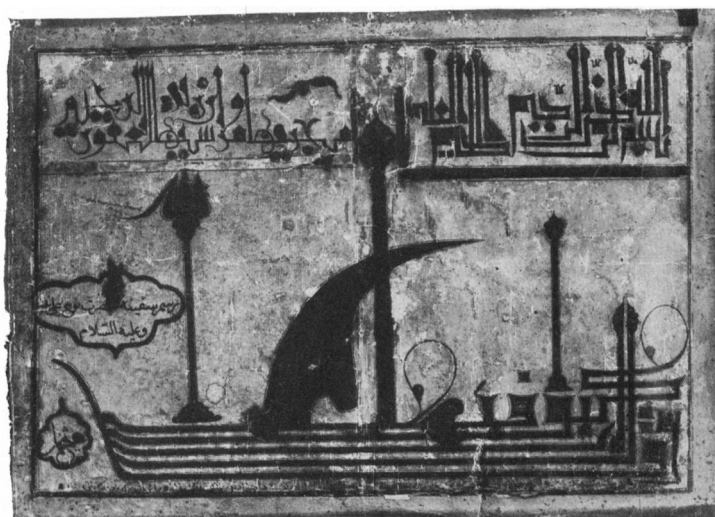


PORTRAIT OF A YOUTH  
 INDO-PERSIAN XVII CENTURY



YOUTH  
 HOLDING A  
 FLOWER

PERSIAN  
 XVI  
 CENTURY



NOAH'S ARK—TURKISH SCRIPT. XII CENTURY



LEAF OF BOOK ON "HYDRAULIC AUTOMATA", XII CENTURY

of the brilliant colors, the fineness of the line-drawing, and because of the interest caused by the representation of contemporary ceremonies and customs in battle, court, and domestic scenes. In the late sixteenth century, the India School rose to prominence and reached its culmination under the Mughal emperors during the seventeenth century. This school is represented by a considerable

number of portraits of Indian princes, both in color and in outline. Many of these examples show remarkable draughtsmanship and were no doubt, excellent likenesses.

Inserted in the text, there are reproduced four pieces from the collection given by Dr. Ross. The leaf of the famous book on "Hydraulic Automata," dating from the twelfth century, is especially in-

teresting. This book was discovered in Constantinople and is said to be the earliest example of its kind. There are only twenty leaves in existence, five of which are owned by the Museum. Of all the paintings of single figures, none surpasses that of the prince holding a flower. The delicacy of the line, the richness of the blue robe touched with gold, and the simplicity and elegance of the whole composition suggest Aga Mirak, one of the foremost Persian artists of the sixteenth century. Of the later examples, one of the most interesting is a portrait of a youth, done in the technique of the "Indo-Persian" school of the seventeenth century. This treatment recalls the Italian prim-

itives. Besides the paintings, the collection includes some important examples of Arabic and Persian writing and illumination in blue and gold—superb specimens of a type of decoration in which the Persians excelled. The example here reproduced is that of Turkish script of the twelfth century, in the form of a ship, which according to the inscription, represents Noah's Ark.

These two collections of Persian and Indian painting and Arabic calligraphy are of the utmost interest and importance in the history of art in the Near Orient, both in the variety of the types represented, and in the excellence of the individual pieces.



CHILDREN AT PLAY

JOHN GELERT, SCULPTOR

A GROUP IN MARBLE